

1200

**Three Hours
at the
Cross**

Good Friday

Three Hours at the Cross I

Noon

We will be dwelling on the events of Easter through the eyes of a Roman soldier on Good Friday. His journey takes him through all manner of attitudes and feelings we can identify with, ranging from boredom and indifference to curiosity, fascination and hope.

Please use the time, especially the silence to ponder where you can identify with him that day. Listen too to the other words we will hear and pray through what you have learned from your journey to Golgotha and the Cross of Christ.

The Governor

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast off the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever, Amen.

Psalm 97 *Dominus regnavit.*

The Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof : yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof.
Clouds and darkness are round about him : righteousness and judgement are the habitation of his seat.
There shall go a fire before him : and burn up his enemies on every side.
His lightnings gave shine unto the world : the earth saw it, and was afraid.
The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord : at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
The heavens have declared his righteousness : and all the people have seen his glory.
Confounded be all they that worship carved images, and that delight in vain gods : worship him, all ye gods.
Sion heard of it, and rejoiced : and the daughters of Judah were glad because of thy judgements, O Lord.
For thou Lord art higher than all that are in the earth : thou art exalted far above all gods.
O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil : the Lord preserveth the souls of his saints; he shall deliver them from the hand of the ungodly.
There is sprung up a light for the righteous : and joyful gladness for such as are true-hearted.
Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous : and give thanks for a remembrance of his holiness.

Reading: Matthew 27. 1 - 14.

The Dream of the Rood [excerpt]

A dream came to me at deep midnight
when humankind kept their beds
- the dream of dreams!
I shall declare it.

It seemed I saw the Tree itself borne on the air, light wound about it,
- a beam of brightest wood, a beacon clad in overlapping gold,
glancing gems fair at its foot, and five stones set in a crux flashed from the crosstree.
Around angels of God all gazed upon it, since first fashioning fair.
It was not a felon's gallows, for holy ghosts beheld it there,
and men on mould, and the whole Making of it shone for it - *signum* of victory!

Stained and marred, stricken with shame I saw the glory tree
shine out gaily, sheathed in yellow decorous gold;
and gemstones made for their Maker's tree a right mail-coat.
Yet through the masking gold I might perceive
what terrible sufferings were once sustained thereon:
It bled from the right side.
Troth in the heart.

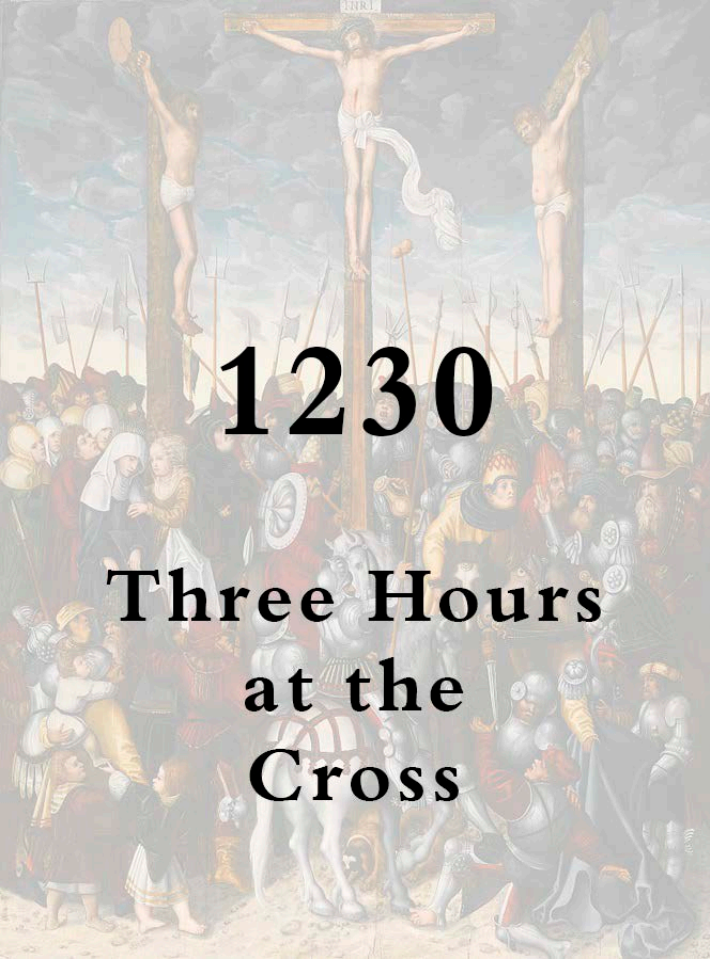
Address

Music

Silence

[at 12:30] The Lord's Prayer.

*The Dream of the Rood is one of the oldest pieces of writing that exists in English.
It is an example of Old English 'dream poetry' about a vision of the 'rod' - Old English for pole or crucifix.
Parts of it can be found on the Ruthwell Cross - a free-standing Anglo Saxon stone, carved cross dating from the
early eighth century.*



1230

**Three Hours
at the
Cross**

Good Friday

Three Hours at the Cross II

12:30

We will be dwelling on the events of Easter through the eyes of a Roman soldier on Good Friday. His journey takes him through all manner of attitudes and feelings we can identify with, ranging from boredom and indifference to curiosity, fascination and hope.

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The Show

Almighty God, we beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family, for which our Lord, Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men and to suffer death upon the cross, who now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever on God, world without end, Amen.

Psalm 69 1 - 20 *Salvum me fac.*

Save me O God : for the waters are come in , even unto my soul.

I stick fast in the deep mire, where no ground is : I am come into deep waters, so that the floods run over me.

I am weary of crying; my throat is dry : my sight faileth me for waiting so long upon my God.

They that hate me without cause are more than the hairs of my head : they that are mine enemies, and would destroy me guiltless are mighty.

I paid them the things that I never took : God, thou knowest my simpleness, and my faults are not hid from thee.

Let not them that trust in thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my cause : let not those that seek thee be confounded through me, O Lord God of Israel.

And why? for thy sake Have I suffered reproof : shame hath covered my face.

I am become a stranger unto my brethren : even an alien unto my mother's children.

For the zeal of thine house hath even eaten me : and the rebukes of them that rebuked thee are fallen upon me.

I wept, and chastened myself with fasting : and that was turned to my reproof.

I put on sackcloth also : and they jested upon me.

They that sit in the gate speak against me : and the drunkards make songs upon me.

But, Lord, I make my prayer unto thee : in an acceptable time.

Hear me, O God, in the multitude of thy mercy : even in the truth of thy salvation.

Take me out of the mire, that I sink not : O let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

Let not the water-flood drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up : and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

Hear me, O Lord, for thy loving-kindness is comfortable : turn thee unto me, according to the multitude of thy mercies.

And hide not thy face from thy servant, for I am in trouble : O haste thee, and hear me.

Draw nigh unto my soul and save it : O deliver me, because of mine enemies.

Thou hast known my reproof, my shame and my dishonour : mine adversaries are all in thy sight.

Reading: Matthew 27. 15 – 26.

If I could shut the gate.

Anon.

If I could shut the gate against my thoughts
And keep out sorrow from this room within,
Or memory could cancel all the notes
of my misdeeds, and I unthink my sin:
How free, how clear, how clean my soul should lie,
Discharged of such a loathsome company!

Or were there other rooms without my heart
That did not to my conscience join so near,
Where I might lodge the thoughts of sin apart
That I might not their clam'rous crying hear;
What peace, what joy, what ease should I possess,
Freed from their horrors that my soul oppress!

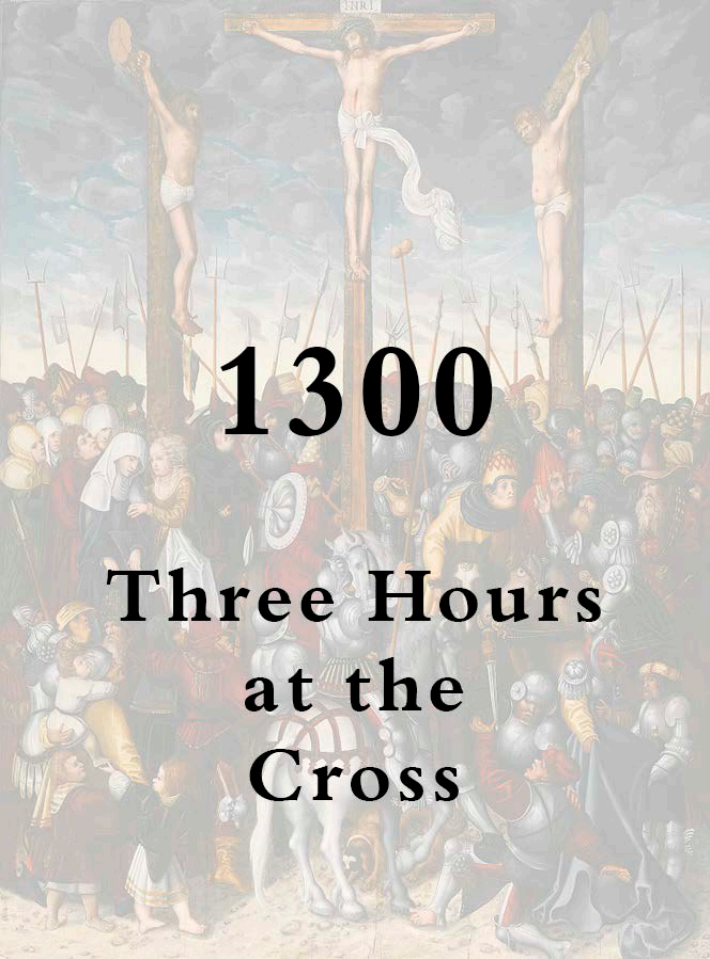
But O, my saviour, who my refuge art,
Let thy dear mercies stand 'twixt them and me,
And be the wall to separate my heart
so that I may at length repose me free;
That peace, and joy, and rest may be within,
and I remain divided from my sin.

Address

Music

Silence

[at 13:00] The Lord's Prayer.



1300

**Three Hours
at the
Cross**

Good Friday

Three Hours at the Cross III

13:00

We will be dwelling on the events of Easter through the eyes of a Roman soldier on Good Friday. His journey takes him through all manner of attitudes and feelings we can identify with, ranging from boredom and indifference to curiosity, fascination and hope.

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The Beating

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished, by the comfort of thy grace may mercifully be relieved, through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, Amen.

Psalm 42 *Quemadmodum.*

Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks : so longeth my soul after thee, O God.

My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God : when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?

My tears have been my meat day and night : while they daily say unto me, Where is now thy God?

Now when I think thereupon, I pour out my heart by myself : for I went with the multitude, and brought them forth into the house of God;

In the voice of praise and thanksgiving : among such as keep holy-day.

Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul : and why art thou so disquieted within me?

Put thy trust in God : for I will yet give him thanks for the help of his countenance.

My God, my soul is vexed within me : therefore will I remember thee concerning the land of Jordan, and the little hill of Hermon.

One deep calleth another, because of the noise of the water-pipes : all thy waves and storms are gone over me.

The Lord hath granted his loving-kindness in the day-time : and in the night-season did I sing of him, and made my prayer unto the God of my life.

I will say unto the God of my strength, Why hast thou forgotten me : and why go I thus heavily, while mine enemies that trouble me cast me in the teeth;

Namely, while they say daily unto me : Where is now thy God?

Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul : and why art thou so disquieted within me?

Put thy trust in God : for I will yet give him thanks for the help of his countenance, and my God.

Reading: Matthew 27. 27 – 31.

The wounded surgeon plies the steel
That questions the distempered part;
Beneath the bleeding hands we fell
The sharp compassion of the healer's art
Resolving the enigma of the fever chart.

Our only health is the disease
If we obey the dying nurse
Whose constant care is not to please
But to remind of our, and Adam's, curse,
And that, to be restored, our sickness must grow worse.

The whole earth is our hospital
Endowed by the ruined millionaire,
Wherein, if we do well, we shall
Die of the absolute paternal care
That will not leave us, but prevents us everywhere.

The chill ascends from feet to knees,
The fever sings in mental wires.
If to be warmed, then I must freeze
And quake in frigid purgatorial fires
Of which the flame is roses and the smoke is briars.

The dripping blood our only drink,
The bloody flesh our only food;
In spite of which we like to think
That we are sound, substantial flesh and blood—
Again, in spite of that, we call this Friday good.

Address

Music

Silence

[at 13:30] The Lord's Prayer.



1330

**Three Hours
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Good Friday

Three Hours at the Cross IV

13:30

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The Journey

O merciful God, who hast made all creatures and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that they should be converted and live; Have mercy on all faithless and hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart and contempt of thy Word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the children of Abraham, and be made one fold under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end, Amen.

Psalm **69.** 21 -30. *Salvum me fac.*

Thy rebuke hath broken my heart; I am full of heaviness : I looked for some to have pity on me; but there was no man; neither found I any to comfort me.

They gave me gall to eat : and when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.

Let their table be made snare to take themselves withal : and let the things that should have been for their wealth be unto them an occasion of falling.

Let their eyes be blinded, that they see not : and ever bow thou down their backs.

Pour out thine indignation upon them : and let thy wrathful displeasure take hold of them.

Let their habitation be void : and no man to dwell in their tents.

For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten : and they talk how they may vex them whom thou hast wounded.

Let them fall from one wickedness to another : and not come into thy righteousness.

Let them be wiped out of the book of the living : and not be written among the righteous.

As for me, when I am poor and in heaviness : thy help, O God, shall lift me up.

Reading: Matthew 27. 32 - 34.

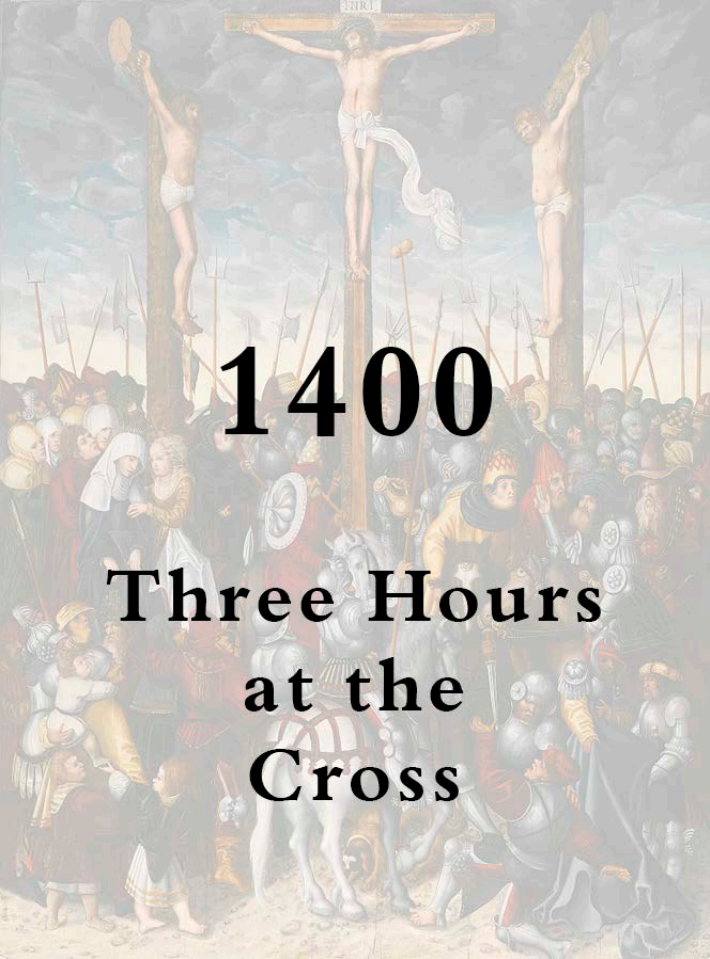
They that have power to hurt and will do none,
That do not do the thin they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold and to temptation slow;
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others but stewards of their excellence.
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to itself it only live and die,
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

Address

Music

Silence

[at 14:00] The Lord's Prayer.



1400

**Three Hours
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Good Friday

Three Hours at the Cross V

14:00

We will be dwelling on the events of Easter through the eyes of a Roman soldier on Good Friday. His journey takes him through all manner of attitudes and feelings we can identify with, ranging from boredom and indifference to curiosity, fascination and hope.

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The Nails

O God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright; Grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Psalm 22. *Deus, Deus meus.*

My God, my God, look upon me; why hast thou forsaken me : and art so far from my health, and from the words of my complaint?

O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not : and in the night-season also I take no rest. And thou continuest holy : O thou worship of Israel.

Our fathers hoped in thee : they trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them.

They called upon thee, and were holpen : they put their trust in thee, and were not confounded.

But as for me, I am a worm, and no man : a very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people.

All they that see me laugh me to scorn : they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying,

He trusted in God, that he would deliver him : let him deliver him, if he will have him.

But thou art he that took me out of my mother's womb : thou wast my hope, when I hanged yet upon my mother's breasts.

I have been left unto thee ever since I was born : thou art my God, even from my mother's womb.

O go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand : and there is none to help me.

Many oxen are come about me : fat bulls of Basan close me in on every side.

They gape upon me with their mouths : as it were a ramping and a roaring lion.

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint : my heart also in the midst of my body is even like melting wax.

My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my gums : and thou shalt bring me into the dust of death.

For many dogs are come about me: and the council of the wicked layeth siege against me.

They pierced my hands and my feet; I may tell all my bones : they stand staring and looking upon me.

They part my garments among them : and cast lots upon my vesture.

But be not thou far from me, O Lord : thou art my succour, haste thee to help me.

Deliver my soul from the sword : my darling from the power of the dog.

Save me from the lion's mouth : thou hast heard me also from among the horns of the unicorns.

I will declare thy Name unto my brethren : in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

O praise the Lord, ye that fear him : magnify him, all ye seed of Jacob, and fear him, all ye seed of Israel;

For he hath not despised, nor abhorred, the low estate of the poor : he hath not hid his face from him, but when he called unto him he heard him.

My praise is of thee in the great congregation : my vows will I perform in the sight of them that fear him. The poor shall eat, and be satisfied : they that seek after the Lord shall praise him; your heart shall live for ever.

All the ends of the world shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord : and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him.

For the kingdom is the Lord's : and he is the Governor among the people.

All such as be fat upon earth : have eaten, and worshipped.

All they that go down into the dust shall kneel before him : and no man hath quickened his own soul.

My seed shall serve him : they shall be counted unto the Lord for a generation.

They shall come, and the heavens shall declare his righteousness : unto a people that shall be born, whom the Lord hath made.

Reading: Matthew 27. 35 - 44.

I wake and feel

G Manley-Hopkins

I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day.
What hours, O what black hours we have spent
This night! what sights you, heart, saw; ways you went!
And more must, in yet longer light's delay.

With witness I speak this. But where I say
Hours I mean years, mean life. And my lament
Is cries countless, cries like dead letters sent
To dearest him that lives alas! away.

I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most deep decree
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed with curse.

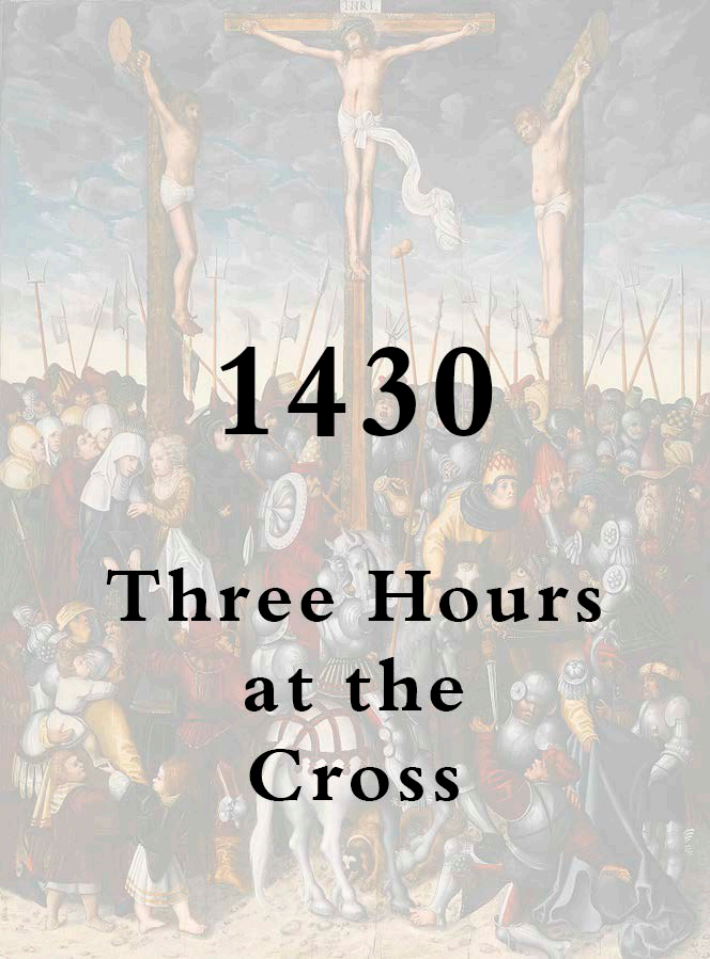
Self-yeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.

Address

Music

Silence

[at 14:30] The Lord's Prayer.



1430

**Three Hours
at the
Cross**

Good Friday

Three Hours at the Cross VI

14:30

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The End

Almighty and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire or deserve; Pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord, Amen.

Psalm **88** *Domine Deus*

O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee : O let my prayer enter into thy presence, incline thine ear unto my calling.
For my soul is full of trouble : and my life draweth nigh unto hell.
I am counted as one of them that go down into the pit : and I have been even as a man that hath no strength.
Free among the dead, like unto them that are wounded, and lie in the grave : who are out of remembrance, and are cut away from thy hand.
Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit : in a place of darkness, and in the deep.
Thine indignation lieth hard upon me : and thou hast vexed me with all thy storms.
Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me : and made me to be abhorred of them.
I am so fast in prison : that I cannot get forth.
My sight faileth for very trouble : Lord, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched forth my hands unto thee.
Dost thou shew wonders among the dead : or shall the dead rise up again, and praise thee?
Shall thy loving-kindness be shewed in the grave : or thy faithfulness in destruction?
Shall thy wondrous works be known in the dark : and thy righteousness in the land where all things are forgotten?
Unto thee have I cried, O Lord : and early shall my prayer come before thee.
Lord, why abhorrest thou my soul : and hidest thou thy face from me?
I am in misery, and like unto him that is at the point to die : even from my youth up thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind.
Thy wrathful displeasure goeth over me : and the fear of thee hath undone me.
They came around me daily like water : and compassed me together on every side.
My lovers and friends hast thou put away from me : and hid mine acquaintance out of my sight.

Reading: Matthew 27. 45 - 54.

Missing - Believed Killed
On reading a mother's letter

Studdert Kennedy

'Twere heaven enough to fill my heart
If only one would stay,
Just one of all the million joys
God gives to take away.

If I could keep one golden dawn,
The splendour of one star,
One silver glint of yon bird's wing
That flashes from afar;

If I could keep the least of things
That make me catch my breath
To gasp with wonder at God's world
And hold it back from death,

It were enough; but death forbids.
The sunset flames to fade,
The velvet petals of the rose
Fall withered - brown - decayed.

She only asked to keep one thing,
The joy-light in his eyes:
God has not even let her know
Where his dead body lies.

O Grave, where is thy victory?
O Death, where is thy sting?
Thy victory is ev'rywhere,
Thy sting's in ev'rything.

Address

Music

Silence

Almighty and everliving God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent; Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

[at 15:00] The Lord's Prayer.